Historical Reflections

ON THE

BISHOP OF ROME:

CHIEFLY DISCOVERING
Those Events of Humane Affaires
which most advanced
THE
PAPAL USURPATION.

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The *PRÆFACE.*

THese Reflections *having lain by me, long enough to coole the heat of my invention; upon a late review of them; I was emboldn'd to this Publication. And here I dare promise the Reader, that he shall not meet with* Crambe bis cocta, *or a meer garbling of other mens labours. For amongst all the various Tracts written against the* Pope, *there never came any into my hands of the same kind. Now if the novelty hereof shall invite any one to a perusal, perhaps he will not altogether repent his pains; especially if he intend for Historical Knowledg. In regard that this Treatise, may serve as a Præmonstratour or Pointer out, of the most remarkable revolutions in* Eccleſiaſtique affairs, *and the most notable junctures of time.*

The thing which I chiefly aime at in the ensuing discourse is, to make it appeare; That the Hierarchical Policy of the Roman Church, was not extant in the Learned times, when the old Roman Empire flouriſht: But was contrived in the daies of ignorance, between the Biſhops of Rome, and the Leaders or Princes of the Barbarians.

barians. *Nor would the truth of this assertion be in the least manner doubted; were we not almost benighted with darke ignorance, in reference to preceeding ages. For as on the one hand; an infinite number of Books, have been partly abolished, partly counterfeited, and Partly adulterated or corrupted: So on the other hand; Those Books which remaine entire, are for the most part written, either by unskilful or partial pens. However from the very present records, an unprejudic'd man though of ordinary parts may gather; That the modern Policy which fashions a great part of the world, as well in Church as State did take it's beginning, since the inundations of the Northerne People.*

July *the* 20. 1660.

POSTCRIPT.

I have not quoted any Authours, for these Passages which are reflected on, in the following Treatise. When I read the Historians, whence the foundation of my discourse is gathered, it was not in my thoughts to make use of them this way. Afterwards reflecting on the series of affairs in Christendome, and framing several meditations thereupon: Though I very well remembred the Historians; yet I had forgot the names of many Historians whence I gathered it. Nevertheless I can assure the Reader, that I have hardly mention'd any Historical passage, which is not very obvious, in one of these three Authours, Blondus, Baronius, *and* Platina.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

That the Roman Biſhops had no ſupremacy over the Primitive Chriſtians.

I Have often delighted to trace out in my mind, the footſteps of the papal uſurpations. And perhaps it will pleaſe the *Reader*, to give him in one view, the ſeveral ſteps or degrees, by which the *Roman* Biſhop roſe unto ſuch a heigth; as to trample upon the necks, not only of his fellow-Biſhops, but alſo of Kings and Emperours themſelves. For that the *Pope* did not from the beginning enjoy, his preſent great and Lordly power, but arrived unto it by ſeveral gradations, in a long proceſſe of time; none but thoſe who are either wholy ignorant of Hiſtory, or elſe ſwayed with invincible prejudice can offer to deny. It being manifeſt on all hands, that in the Primitive times, the *Roman* Biſhops were not

taken notice of, as superiours to all others; much lesse as sole Vicars under *Christ*, and infallible dictatours of Divine truth. Indeed you may meet in the ancient Authours, with commendations given unto the faith, professed by the Bishops of *Rome*. Which is no wonder to him that considers, how pious at first they were in their lives, how glorious in their deaths, bearing witnesse to the Truth under Persecution. Besides, when the whole Christian world was under one Empire, and *Rome* the Metropolis or Emperial City; It was but rational, that the new and rising sect of the Christians, should bestow the notabl'st men of their party in that place. Hence it came to passe, that the *Fathers* dwelling in the Provinces, when they contested with *Hereticks*, did often commend the *Roman* Faith: as it were upbraiding their Antagonists, with a departure from those, who resided in the Metropolis of the Empire, where usually Learning and Religion doe most flourish.

And to speak the truth; That advantage which the *Roman* Bishops had, by dwelling in the Emperial City, was the chiefe temptation, at first inducing them to affect a supremacy. For that the dignity and grandeur of a City, or place of residence, was wont to put spirits into the Bishops residing therein, *Rome* is not the onely example. So did *Alexandria* puffe up her Bishops. So did *Jerusalem* Hers. So especially did *Constantinople*, make *John the Constantinopolitan* swell with ambition and pride, affecting the title of Oecumenical Bishop. Nay, which you'l more wonder at, even so did

did *Ravenna*, when proud with *Exarchs*, animate her Biſhop alſo, in contending with the *Roman* for ſuperiority. Which contention went ſo far, that the Church of *Ravenna* by reaſon of her ſeparation from *Rome*, was commonly called *Allocephalis*. Now by how much the renowned and ancient *Rome*, was more venerable in the eyes of men, than other Cities; by ſo much had the *Roman* Biſhops a fairer opportunity than others, to put themſelves forward, and uſurp an unlawfull power. Nor needed they to be minded of this advantage: ſuch of them as were of haughty ſpirits, beginning betimes to make uſe of it; amongſt whom I may juſtly reckon *Leo* ſurnamed *the Great*. For he and ſeverall others did take all occaſions to ſend pragmaticall letters, up and down the world about every important buſineſſe, which happened in Chriſtendome.

Nevertheleſſe let no one be afraid of the *Roman* Biſhops, and be ready to aſcribe unto them an univerſall Dioceſſe, when he finds them frequently ſending ſtately letters, to the Biſhops throughout the Chriſtian world. Many of thoſe letters recorded in the book, entitled *Epiſtolæ decretales ſummorum Pontificum* are falſe and counterfeit; many adulterated or corrupted; and many if true, are ſo haughtily written, as to argue the Authours pride, but not his power. For in the pimitive times, the Chriſtian Biſhops did generally (and not only the *Roman*) write often to their fellow Biſhops, in whatſoever place they reſided. And this they did whether they had any power one over the

other or no, meerly from a Principle of love or Chriſtian charity. Which familiar epiſtolary entercourſe with one another, was in thoſe daies laudable, and allmoſt neceſſary: In regard the whole Chriſtian world was at that time under one Empire. Conſequently they were obliged, to exhort and admoniſh one another, upon a twofold reſpect. Partly grounded on that intereſt, which members of the ſame Commonwealth, eſpecially thoſe of the ſame rank have with one another: And partly grounded on that ſpiritual communion, which ought to be between believers, eſpecially thoſe of the ſame calling.

But alas, had the world been perſwaded in the primitive times, that the letters of the *Roman* Biſhop were not onely charitative adviſoes; but dictatorian mandates neceſſary to be obeyed: As proceeding forſooth from one, whom *Chriſt* had appointed head of his Church, and an oracle whence nothing but veritable anſwers ſhould be heard. I ſay, had ſuch a perſwaſion poſſeſſed the minds of men; They would have made it the common ſubject of their praiſes and thankſgiving. Without queſtion many Panegyricall orations, and many homilies would have been made, upon no other theme or text, than the praiſes of the *Roman See*, "and thanks unto God, for beſtowing on "the Chriſtians, a viſible unerring decider of controverſie. Whereas on the contrary, if we peruſe the ancient Writers, we ſhall plainly perceive; how little the noiſe was, which the *Roman* Biſhops did make in their daies: So little that I much wonder they were no more

more talkt of, conſidering (as I ſaid before) their reſidence in the Metropolitan City, and their virtues eminent in the firſt Biſhops. Have not the *Fathers* been very malignant in this caſe, (if the papal pretenſes were true) not to leave it ſet down expreſly in any of their writings, That *Chriſt made Peter the head of his Church, and gave unto him an infallible ſpirit*: As alſo that *Peter being Biſhop of Rome, The following Biſhops in that City ſucceeded, him not only in his Biſhoprick; but likewiſe in his great priviledges of headſhip and infallibility.* Moreover, did not the Fathers trouble themſelves to no purpoſe in toyling to make laborious confutations of hereticks, if they might have had preſent recourſe to a viſible unerring authority, in deciſion of controverſies. So that ſuppoſe the Hereticks had refuſed to ſubmit unto this authority; The maine worke ſhould have been not to confute their opinions, but to convince them of the duty of their obedience to the ſupreme judg.

For my own part I verily believe, that if the Biſhops of *Rome* had been acknowledged in the primitive times, to be what he pretends to in theſe daies; The eyes of all nations would have been upon, that *ſee*; to revere it, to honour it, to bow down before it in the ſubmiſſion of their underſtandings. Nay further, I am really perſwaded; Had *Chriſt* intended ſuch a ſupreme power in his Church: Seeing it doth ſo highly import the Church's welfare to be generally known; We ſhould have had it ſet down in Scripture, with as expreſſe termes, as we find Juſtification by faith, or

the resurrection of the dead. But now on the contrary, what is there left by the holy *Penmen*, which may be said to patronize, the supremacy and infallibility of *Peter*, and the *Roman* Bishops? As for *Peter*; how easy were it for me, to evacuate those trivial arguments, which are drawn from Scripture concerning him? which I forbeare to doe, because it is not my intent, to insist upon Logical arguments either *pro* or *con*; but only to reflect on Historical passages.

Wherefore I cannot chuse but take notice, that when *Peter* came to *Antioch*; he walked not according to the truth; but was guilty of a great scandall, and thereupon withstood to the face by *Paul*. Who makes it his businesse in the two first Chapters to the *Galatians*, to prove himselfe equall with the rest of the *Apostles*. Nay when *Peter* (to speak according to their own phrase) was in *Cathedra*; in the midst of a Councel of *Apostles*, and other brethren: The definitive sentence to which all did assent, proceeded from the mouth of *James*.

As for the *Roman* Bishop, you must not look to have any hint of him in Scripture. *Peter* never being taken notice of, under such a capacity: Nay, *Paul* in those several *Epistles*, which he wrote either to or from *Rome*, doth not so much as mention *Peter*. Which is somewhat strange, if *Peter* did dwell in that City. For *Paul* is solicitous, in mentioning severall others farre lesse considerable; whom he doth either salute, or send salutations from to others. But what if it should be granted that *Peter* was at *Rome*? I am confident it would

would trouble the whole *Papacy*, to prove that ever he was Biſhop of that City. *Paul* it's certain was there, and thoſe who contend that *Peter* was too, doe generally hold, they were both martired at the ſame time, the one by the Sword, the other by the Croſſe. Why then was *Peter* Biſhop, and not *Paul?* I'me ſure the Scripture ſaith, that *Paul* was entruſted with the Goſpel of the Uncircumciſion, as *Peter* with that of the Circumciſion: Nay *James*, and *Peter*, and *John*, did ſolemnly give the right hands of fellowſhip, unto *Barnabas* and *Paul*; That they ſhould goe to the Gentiles, and themſelves unto thoſe of the Circumciſion.

CHAP. II.

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How or by what causes the Pope was advanced to a supremacy in the Church.

BUt I shall not trouble my selfe any longer, to make it appeare; that neither *Peter*, nor the primitive Bishops of *Rome*, had that power, which the later Bishops pretend to derive from them: There being few in our Nation, that will gainsay the truth of what I have said. Wherefore having allready made, such briefe remarques, as plainly evince the *Pope* to be an usurper: I am now come to what I did chiefely intend, namely to lay down the severall steps or degrees, by which he was advanc'd in his usurpations. This I shall doe by reflecting on the events of humane affairs, and giving an account in order, of the severall causes; which did cooperate towards the bringing of the intolerable R*oman* yoake, on the necks of our *Forefathers*.

The first Cause therefore was, *The removing of the Emperial seat by Constantine.* For though a good while after him, there were Westerne as well as Eastern Emperours: yet after the seising on *Italy*, by the *Heruls* first, and then the *Goths*; The Emperial Majesty did entirely reside at *Constantinople*. Now this City by

by *Conſtantines* means, was grown ſo magnificent and auguſt, that it was dearer to the Emperours, than *Rome* in ſelfe. Inſomuch that when *Belliſarius* and *Narſes*, had recovered *Italy* from the *Goths*; The Emperours never affected, to goe and reſide at old *Rome*, by which means the Biſhop thereof, gained the more elbow rome to play *REX*.

Secondly, *The reſiding of the Italian exarchs at Ravenna. Juſtine* the ſecond was Authour of the *Exarchy*; to which kind of government the *Italian* writers impute, moſt of the calamities afterwards befalling *Italy*. But indeed it was the occaſion of an other guiſe calamity, than they were aware of. For now neither the Emperour himſelfe, nor ſo much as his *Exarch* reſided at *Rome*: only a petty companion, who was ſent by the *Exarchs* to præſide over the City; and was called *Duke*, in the ſame manner as the governour of *Narni*, *Spoleto*, and other townes of Italy. Hence it came to paſſe, that the ſplendour of Emperiall Majeſty being far removed, from the eyes of the *Roman* people: Their Biſhops ſhone ſo much the brighter, and gaind a proportionable increaſe of veneration.

Thirdly; *The comming of the Lombards into Italy*; who intending the finall conqueſt of that Country for themſelves; made it their buſineſſe to deſtroy the power of the Emperour, whom they found Lord thereof. Wherefore as ſoone as the Emperour began to chaſtiſe, the Inſolency of any Roman Biſhop, (who now by reaſon of the aforementioned cauſes began to play tricks) The *Lombard* was at hand to help him. Again

on the otherside, when the *Lombard* out of a desire to win *Rome* it selfe, fell foule with it's Bishop; The Emperour for fear of loosing his dominion, was faine to helpe him, whom before he did endeavour to punish Marke how capriciously things in those daies stood, and how exceeding well they suited with the *Roman* Bishop Whensoever he had to doe with the *Lombard*, he was sure of the Emperours help; And when he contended with his Master, the Barbarian presently took his part. Thus did he rivet himselfe into his Authority, between the *Emperour* and the *Lombard*; till at last by the helpe of the *French*, He brought them both below himselfe, as to any *Italian* Dominion.

Fourthly; *The reputation of Gregory, the first Roman Bishop of that name, who was sirnamed the Great.* This man lived in the hottest season of the Barbarian violence, when the Empire of the *Romans* and their learning failed. In such an age as that was; he being endowed with great natural parts, and well accomplisht with acquired perfections, did easily overtop his contemporaries. Before he was Bishop; By his retiring for devotion's sake to the private life of a Monk; By his zealous turning his own house at *Rome* into a Monastery; In general, by his outward austerity and sanctity of life, he so gained upon the *Roman* people; that they would not part with him, when he proffered to goe into *Brittany*, for to convert the *Saxons*. And when he was sent to *Constantinople* upon publique employment, he quickly obtained the Emperour's favour.

After-

Afterwards when he was choſen Biſhop; By his zeale in continuing to write volume upon volume concerning the Chriſtian Doctrine; As alſo in deſtroying the Heathen Authours, and thoſe goodly buildings at *Rome*, which he feared might tempt the admiring beholders to hanker after the ancient *Roman* glory; By his new modelling the Chriſtian worſhip, adding many inventions of his own, to make it more ſplendid and pompous in vulgar eyes; By his converting the *Engliſh Saxons*; By theſe and many other waies he grew renowned in the world, and filled Chriſtendome with his name. Nor did his glory expire with his life; About an hundred years after this *Gregory*, our *Bede* in the Weſt, and *Monke Damaſcene* in the Eaſt, were paſſionate in their reſpects for him, and highly magnified him in their writings. Nay generally the *Monks* for a long time, did ſo reverence his memory that he ſeemed to eclipſe the primitive *Fathers*. Now this great eſteem and high valuation which the world had of *Gregory the firſt*, did redound upon the *Roman See*, and proved notably advantageous for his ſucceſſours. But nothing more ſtrengthned their hands, than his converting our *Engliſh Nation*. No people in the world for a long time after were more prodigal of their bloud, more enpenſive of their eſtates, in behalfe of the *Roman Biſhops*, than our *Engliſh*: No people more earneſt in their devotion to *Rome*. This can be attributed to nothing elſe, but their converſion by *Gregory*, and to that impreſſion which his memory had left in the minds of their Anceſtours, and was handed along

from father to sonne. Nay what say ye, if at this very day; the Gregorian praises be fresh amongst our *English* Papists, who also have a tender regard for the memory of their Convertor *Austin*, and love the very *Benedictines* for his sake?

Fifthly; *The prodigious growth of the Saracenical Empire, founded by Mahomet in the time of Heraclius.* The *Saracens* cut out so much worke, for the Græcian Emperour in his Easterne provinces, that he was forced to neglect, and at last give over his interest in the West. Now this may be observed all along in History; that the weakning of the Emperours, was the strengthning of the Popes.

Sixthly; *The general deluge of Barbarians, overwhelming the Romans in the West, much about the same time that the Saracens did in the East. Pannonia, Italie, Spaine, France, Brittain,* were all over-run not many years after one another. These *Barbarians* comming from *Climates*, frozen with ignorance as well as cold, did both give and receive, a Conquest. As they Conquered the *Romans*, by their Sword: So they were reciprocally foild by the *Roman* Learning and Religion. Now the Bishop of *Rome*, was the grand instrument of their conversion. For in those times of general desolation, he best held his own; and was most eminent in the eyes of the *Barbarians*, by reason of his residence in that Renowned City; concerning which, before their passage over the *Rhine* and the *Danow*, they had heard their Fathers speak of old. How feasable then was it, for him to foist what he pleas'd into the beliefe of those

thoſe men, who newly came from worſhipping ſuch kind of Gods, as *Ægypt* was wont to adore? Alas thoſe ſilly ſoules, taken up with amazement at a diſcovery of the true God, had neither leaſure nor ability to attend, the obſerving of thoſe obtruded foppe-ries, which they did imbibe together with the principles of their Religion: Wherefore if he that firſt told them, of an omnipotent eternal God, whoſe ſeat was in the higheſt Heavens, and of a Crucified Saviour, did at the ſame time tell them of a St *Peter* and his Succeſſour; Tis no wonder that they believed one, as well as the other. If *Valens* the Emperour be an *Arrian*, then all thoſe whom he converts will be *Arrians* too. For it is well known, that the *Viſigoths* flying from before the approaching Hun, when they had obtained their requeſt from *Valens*, for a quiet Habitation in *Thrace*, did not only receive from him the Doctrine of Chriſt, but that of *Arrius* alſo: Inſomuch that they and their poſterity for a long time after, did ſtoutly maintain *Arrianiſm*. So great a prevalency hath that Doctrine, which is firſt ſeated in the ſpirits of men. Here I ſhall crave leave of the reader, to make a ſmall digreſſion concerning *Baronius*, with a promiſe to trouble him ſo no more. *Baronius* in his annals will needs have it, contrary to ſeveral Hiſtorians; that theſe *Goths* were converted to Chriſtianity, long before the time of *Valens*. His reaſon is, becauſe in the time of *Conſtantine*, they had a Biſhop named *Theophilus*, preſent at the *Nicene Councel*. But I ſuppoſe nothing can be lawfully concluded thence,

excepting this; that some few of them were Christians in the dayes of *Constantine*: For my part, that the body of their nation was converted, before their entrance into *Thrace*, by the permission of *Valens*, I see no reason to believe.

Seventhly; *The Colluſion between Zacharias the third, and Pipin Major domo to the King of France.* *Pipin* made use of *Zacharias's* authority, towards the decision of that ridiculous question; which was so solemnly sent to *Rome*. Namely; *Whether he that had the name and title of a King only, being given to idleneſſe: or he that was active and exerciſed the office and power of a King, deſerved to weare the regal diademe?* Which in plain termes was this; Whether *Chilperick* King of *France*, descended from the ancient race of Kings, having out of respect to his own ease, entrusted the management of affairs with his servant *Pipin*; might not be turned out of that throne, which his ancestours had so long enjoyed, by his own servant, whom he had unadvisedly raiſ'd, to a Capacity of doing it if he would? The good Pope was not ashamed of this senseleſſe question, nor needed he to be instructed, how profitable it was to judge for the strongest: At length it came to this, that King *Chilperick's* head was shaven, and his man *Pipin's* wore the Crown. Now *Pipin* having made use of pontificial authority to cheat the poore *Francks* of King, and to invade the temporal Soveraignty, and out of gratitude recompense the *Pope*, with a spiritual jurisdiction over the *Gallicane Church*. Nay further, when *Deſiderius* the Lombard infeſted *Gregory* the

the third, *Pipin* out of a tender regard to that *See*, which had been ſo friendly towards him; not only by his aid delivered the *Pope*, from feare of being beſieged in *Rome*, but gave him as the *Italian* writers ſay, the *Exarchate* with ſeveral other territories.

Eighthly, *The Conquering arms of Charlemaign ſon to King Pipin*; who having the ſame reaſons that his Father had, to indulge the *pontificial See*, confirmed whatſoever his Father *Pipin* had granted to the *Pope*. Yet to make him the more ſure, *Leo the third* with the people of *Rome*, elected him *Roman* Emperour. Hence it came to paſſe, that as far as the Conqueſts made by *Charlemaigne* did reach; So farre alſo did *Papal* authority extend: No otherwiſe than the *Mahometan* doctrine, did enlarge it's bounds, by the victorious arms of *Ottoman*.

Thus have we proceeded, to the *Pope's* Eccleſiaſtique ſupremacy, through eight ſeverall cauſes. Of which the ſix former, may be accounted the more remote or procatarctique; The two latter being thoſe, which put together, doe integrate the principal efficient and adæquate cauſe. For although the ſix procatarctiques, did very much embroile the Church affairs, and laid them in a tendency to *Papal* encroachments: yet it is evident that the univerſal power, which the *Pope* acquired over the Weſtern Churches, owed it's very riſe and being, to the notorious jugling between the *Roman* Biſhops, and the uſurpers of the *French Merovingean* Crown. Well therefore may the Kings of *France*, be ſtiled the eldeſt ſons of the *Papal* Church: Nay rather

ther let them be ſtiled fathers thereof. There being no appearance in Hiſtory, of a generall ſubmiſſion unto the *pontificiall See*; untill the dayes of the traitor *Pipin*, and the Emperour his Son. But then you may perceive, as it were a bargain ſtroake of mutual aſſiſtance, between the *pontificial* and the *French* tyrants. The *pontificial* aſſiſtance, is made uſe of by *Pipin*, for the depoſing his maſter, and invading the French Crown: By *Charles* his Sonne, for the obtaining of the Weſtern Empire. They on the other ſide, in lieu of their ſecular Kingdomes, ſettle upon the *Popes* an Eccleſiaſtique Soveraignty. Nor are they content to gratifie them only ſo, but they muſt needs be giving them a very fair temporal demeans. The taſt of which did ſo pleaſe their palates, that they have been ever ſince hankering, to be Lords paramount over all the world, in Civil as well as Eccleſiaſtical affairs. Wherefore it behoves me next to ſet down, the remaining cauſes of the *Papal* encroachment; Whereby the Biſhop of *Rome* was encouraged, to uſurp unto himſelfe the rights of the Magiſtrate.

CHAP. III.

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How or by what Cauſes the Pope was not onely confirmed in his Eccleſiaſtical uſurpation, but was alſo encouraged to invade the rights of the Magiſtrate.

HEre I ſhall in the firſt place premiſe, that the cauſes mention'd in the foregoing Chapter, did not only advance the *Pope's* Eccleſiaſtique Tyrannie; but alſo had an influence upon the making of way, for his temporal uſurpation. Had he not firſt come to that heighth in the *Church*, he could never have dreamt of a ſuperintendency over the *ſtate*. Likewiſe the cauſes which now follow, are to be allowed an influence upon the *Popes* domination ſpiritual, by way of confirming him in his unjuſt acqueſts Although I confeſſe they do more neerly concerne his invading the rights of the Magiſtrate, in regard that we have already brought him unto the higheſt pinnacle in the *Church*.

Ninthly; *The donation which* Pipin *made, and his ſonne* Charles *confirmed unto the Pope*; whereby he was poſſeſſed of a very large territory: yet not as Lord in chiefe thereof, but rather as a dependant on the Empire, as appeares by ſeveral actions of *Charlemaigne*,

and his Sons after him; which sufficiently evince, that they kept the Soveraignty of those places still unto themselves; however this proved such a bait of temptation, to the *Pope*, that he hath ever since had an unbridled lust, after the kingdomes of this world, and the glory thereof: insomuch, that he who pretends to be the *Universal Vicar of Christ*, and *Deputy* to Him in His Kingdome, seems unto me a pretty riddle. Our *Saviour* doth absolutely Declare, that His Kingdome is not of this world: But I pray to what world doth that belong, which is full of armed Souldiers, walled Cities, fortified Havens, strong Gallies, great Guns, abundance of Ammunition and Treasures.

Tenthly; *The general decay of Learning, after the dayes of* Charlemaign: Whence it came to passe, that the *East* and the *West*, were not more alienated one from the other, by the distinction of different Empires, than they were, by the want of mutual correspondence in learned entercourses. Nay it was the policy of the *Popes*, by affronts done to the Emperours, and several other waies, to augment the strangenesse between the *Greeks* and the *Latines*. That so the *Barbarians* being brought up in a prejudice, against the *Gracians*; might neglect their language, and consequently be overcast with such a night of ignorance, that they should not be able to see the injustice of the *Papal* proceedings. And truly to the losse of the *Greek* tongue, may justly be imputed the losse of all purity in the *Latine*; and consequently of *History*, *Geography*, skill in *Antiquity*, and whatsoever savour'd of

of polite learning. Thus the whole Weſtern Empire were quite deprived of the benefit they might have received, by informing their judgments in Religion, with the goodly books that were written in *Greek*; Nay they did not ſo much as knowingly converſe, with the *Latin Fathers*: So that it was allmoſt impoſſible for them, to be acquainted with the infant purity of the Chriſtian religion, which they had taken upon truſt from the *Roman* Biſhop. Whereas if they had but well ſtudied, the writings of thoſe men, whoſe Fathers were converted together with, nay ſome before the Biſhop of *Rome*; it would have been manifeſt, that he was no ſuch man amongſt the firſt Chriſtians, as he pretended himſelfe to be amongſt them: As alſo how notoriouſly for the advancing of his own power, he had impoſ'd upon the credulous ignorance of their Heathen ſouls. Now that this tenth reaſon of the *Papal* encroachment, is not a bare notion, or a thing meerly bred in my own private conceptions, any one will confeſſe; who doth but conſider, how really it is exemplified in the ſeries of humane tranſactions. As long as this fog of ignorance, did darken mens underſtandings; neither the preaching, nor the martyrdome of thouſands of people, could much prevaile to the ſhaking off the *Roman* yoke. But the caſe was quite alter'd, when at the taking of *Conſtantinople*, the *Græcian* ſchollars were forced to fly for refuge among the Weſtern Chriſtians; they every where teaching their own tongue; the reviving of that noble language, did bring along with it, the reſtoration

of all Learning. So that now what neither *Wickleſ*, nor *Hus*, nor *Hierome of Prague*, nor the *Waldenſes* and *Albigenſes* could effect, that *Luther* and *Calvin* have wonderfully perform'd, to the Converſion of whole Nations. As ſoon as the reſtoration of learning had enlightned the world, men were of their own accord diſpoſ'd to follow any: who by breaking the ice as it were, ſhould lead the way to their ſpiritual freedome.

Eleventhly, *The fatal diſcord between the grand children of Charles the Great*; who as ſoon as their Father *Lewis* the Godly was dead, fell together by the eares about the Empire. At laſt they came to this compoſition, that *Lewis* ſhould be King of *Germany*, and ſo much of *France*, as lieth betwixt the *Meuſe* and the *Rhine*. *Charles* ſhould be King of the reſt of *France*, except the Province of *Narbone*: which together with *Italy*, and the title of Emperour fell to *Lotharius*; who indeed ought to have been Emperour of the whole, as being the eldeſt, and choſen by their Father in his life time, to be his Colleague in the Empire: Thus was the Empire of *Charlemaign* cantonized by his Nephews, and at laſt brought to a contemptible ſtate, for want of eſtabliſhing a firme ſucceſſion in the Eldeſt. Hence it came to paſſe, that the *Huns*, the *Saracens*, and the *Lombard Dukes*, did miſerably afflict the Empire, finding no united ſtrength to oppoſe them. Moreover *France* fell quite off from the Empire, being Governed by its own Kings. Nay when *Otho the great*, had ſetled the confuſions brought upon

Italy;

Italy, by *Berengarius Guido* and *Lambert*. Yet ſtill did the old danger hang over the Empire, for want of a firme Succeſſion: For as ſoon as he and his Son *Otho the ſecond* were dead; There grew that quarrel between ſome of the *Romans* and the *Germans*, about election of a new Empirour, which made way for the *Pope* to order all things, according to his own advantage, as appeares by the twelth cauſe that next followes.

Twelfthly, *The formal making of the Empire elective, by the conſtitution of* Otho *the third, and* Gregory *the fifth*; whereby the *Romans* were excluded from the chuſing of their own Emperour; It being wholy conferred on the *Germane* Princes. *Otho* and *Gregory* were induced to make this alteration, by ſome affronts which they had received from the *Roman* people. For *Otho* after the death of his Father, had like to have miſſed of the Emperiall Crown. The party of one *Creſcentius* a powerfull Roman, publickly giving out, that it was high time for the *Italians*, to chooſe themſelves an Emperour, and to bring the ſeat of the Empire into *Italy* again. However *Otho* at laſt carried it, and *Creſcentius* with his party did ſubmit. But when *Otho* had made, his own Countryman and kinſman *Bruno Pope*, by the name of *Gregory the fifth*, the *Romans* brake out into greater diſcontents than formerly, ſo that the new made *Pope* is faine to fly for't. In his abſence the people of *Rome* make *Creſcentius* their Conſul, and he makes *John Biſhop of Placentia Pope*. Well, the Emperour *Otho* marches into *Italy*,

takes the Castle of St *Angelo* in which *Crescentius* had fortified himselfe, and puts him to an ignominous death. And having cruelly tortured *John of Placentia*, he resettles his Cozen *Pope Gregory*. Hereupon he and his Cozen having been equally vext by the *Roman* people, did take a sharpe revenge, in transferring from them, upon their own nation, the power of chooſing the Emperour. *Otho* had no children to care for, and so was the more desirous to have the Empire setled in an Elective way; after such a manner as he thought was advantagious to the *Germans*. The cunning *Pope*, did not only gratifie his Countrimen, the *Germans*; and revenge himselfe upon his enemies the *Italians*; but also abundantly provide for the emolument of his succeſſours. It being provided in this constitution, that he who was Elected by the *German Princes*, should be called *Cæsar* or *King* of the *Romans*; but not *Emperour* or *Augustus*, till he was crowned and consecrated by the Bishop of *Rome*. Thus was the unreasonabl'st thing in the world committed; that a Bishop should take from a People, over whom he had but the spiritual charge, their temporal birthright of Electing their own *Prince*, and conveigh much of it into his own hands. But when was this done? Even in that barbarous age, which was wrapt up in the very midnight of ignorance; which brought not forth, so much as one Eccleſiastique writer either good or bad. And therefore is noted for a miserable age, by *Bellarmine* himselfe in the Column of his Chronology over against those times, which Column is entitled *Varia*.

Thir-

Thirteenthly, *The unhappy juncture of a ſilly, raſh, inconſiderate* Emperour; *And a cunning, ſubtile, audacious Pope, at the very ſame time. I mean* Henry *the fourth, and* Pope *Hildebrand alias* Gregory *the ſeventh. Henry* led a moſt diſſolute, extravagant life, in making traffick with the *German Biſhops* ſelling their preferments for mony. Beſides he went about to enſlave the *Saxons*, a conſiderable body of his ſubjects; by building Caſtles in their Country to keep them in awe, whil'ſt they were trampled upon by his licentious creatures. This made the *Saxons*, take armes in defenſe of their own liberty, and at firſt they forced him to a compoſition: But afterwards he gathering a great army together, quite routed the *Saxons*, and within a while got their chiefe Princes into his power, having firſt paſſed his word for their ſecurity by the mouths of his Ambaſſadours. Now ſuch was the baſeneſſe of his nature, that having once got them into his power, he brake his word and promiſe with them all, excepting *Otho Duke of Bavaria*, to the great regret of the *German Princes*. Things ſtood in this poſture, when *Hildebrand or Gregory the ſeventh* took occaſion to fiſh in troubled waters. For the *Pope* obſerving, that the *Germans* were generally diſcontented, with the perfidious cruelty of their Emperour, judged it the moſt opportune ſeaſon, to trample upon Emperial Majeſty. Wherefore he ſummons *Henry* to appear at *Rome*, and give in his anſwers to thoſe accuſations, that were brought againſt him for ſelling the Epiſcopal preferments. *Henry*, inſtead of appearing, con-

venes

venes a Councel at *Wormes*. Where it is decreed, that the *Pope* ſhall be degraded from his pontificial dignity, becauſe he came to it by ſiniſter and unlawfull meanes. *Hildebrand* hearing this, excommunicates the chiefe of the Councel, and not only them, but the Emperour too; interdicting him from Government, and diſengaging (forſooth) his Subjects from their oath of obedience. Now one would have thought, that the world ſhould have whooted at the arrogance of this proud Prieſt, and have taken him down from that domineering throne; whence he had taken the boldneſſe to act ſuch a part of Lordly pride. But alas the *Germans* were ſo far from checking the Papal inſolence, as that they were glad of an occaſion to oppoſe the Emperour, for the relieving their own grievances. Wherefore they combin'd together, and raiſed ſuch a formidable ſtrength, that the Emperour was forced unto baſe ſubmiſſions to the Pope. And though at laſt *Henry* did ſo beſtir himſelfe, that he depos'd this pragmatical *Gregory the ſeventh*. Yet was not that revenge, no nor the bloud of a thouſand *Hildebrands*, able to waſh off that ſtain, which the Emperial Majeſty had received. For the ſucceding Popes having once had a preſident caſe, wherein they ſaw an Emperour was not only excommunicated, and interdicted from government by a Biſhop of *Rome*, but was forc'd to ſtoop, and ſubmit unto that interdictment, by his own ſubjects; They never left afterward, to thunder out their Bulls of excommunication, againſt any Prince, that did but enterfere with their ambition.

Four-

Fourteenthly, *The ſelling of the Emperial right to many chiefe Italian Cities; ſuch as Florence, Genoa, Lucca, Bologne and others, by the Emperour Rodolph of Hasburg.* Who was of ſuch a careleſſe humour, as that he was wont in ſport, to give the ſame reaſon for his not viſiting *Italy*, which the Fox did for his not Viſiting the Lion. *To wit he could ſee the ſteps of thoſe, that went thither; but not of thoſe that came back again.* The truth is, *Rodolph's* ſupine negligence about the *Italian* affairs, did ſo break the neck of the Emperial intereſt in *Italy*, that it could never hold up it's head again to any purpoſe. For although the Emperour *Henry the ſeventh*, did beſtir himſelfe ſomewhat in the ſetling of *Lombardy*, and appointing a *Sherif* to governe *Milaine*: yet not long after, the Emperour was grown ſo contemptible, that *Charles the fourth* was crowned, by the conſent of *Pope Innocent the fourth*, upon this condition; that he ſhould pack immediatly out of *Italy*. *Charles* obeyed his high and mighty holineſſe, and paſſing homeward through *Milaine*; he did utterly evacuate the Emperial power in *Italy*, by making the ſhreifdome of *Milaine* Hæreditary, for which he received a good ſum of mony. A good ſum alſo his Son *Wenceſlaus* did afterwards receive, to make the Sheriſdome a Dukedome. Thus the *Popes* ſaw at laſt, that which their hearts had ſo long panted after, namely the Emperours quite ſtript of their dominion in *Italy*, and themſelves free from being under the noſe of them, who rais'd the pontificial greatneſſe, and are by right the Lords and Maſters of their Holineſſes.

After this the Emperours enjoyed, only an insignificant titular paramountship over *Italy*; whereby they did now and then for mony, turne an Earldome into a Marquisate, and a Marquisate into a Dukedome.

Fifteenthly; *The growing in fashion, of a very corrupt and adulterate kind of Learning, called School Divinity.* A thing compounded of some truths some Papal inventions, and some Aristotelical shall I say, or rather Arabian Philosophy. For it is certain, that the Philosophy which then flourisht, was taught and improved by such men, who understood not *Aristotle.* Nay which is worse, who derived their knowledg from the *Arabians*, that did not understand him themselves. But that which made this Philosophy the more imperfect was; The men who professed it were such as sate in their studies, abstracted from the observation and experience of things; conversing only with notions, and multiplying one notion after another, till at last they arrived, (pardon an odde phrase) to the *Cobweb subtilty of a wordy nothingnesse.* Hence it became a meer shop of controversial uncertainties, and a storehouse of twofac'd distinctions, which serve to countenance what side of the question you please. Since therefore this Philosophy, is of a nature so æquivocal, and jugling; no man needs to wonder, if the Schoolmen by applying it to Divinity, were able to fashion religion into what forme they pleas'd. For although the whole Masse of their distinctions, could never by mincing the matter, turne one falsehood into a truth: yet they

they might ſo far pare and ſlice a falſhood; as to make it ſhew trim enough, to deceive a præpoſſeſſed underſtanding. I ſay a præpoſſeſſed underſtanding; Becauſe the Pontificial Doctrine had in thoſe daies, taken poſſeſſion of almoſt all our parts of the Chriſtian world, and had the wealth of the nations in it's own diſpoſal: Children were brought up in that perſwaſion, and when they were grown men, the hopes of all their preferment lay that way. Now this is palpable enough, that when the bent of our underſtanding, is enclined to any party, by the ſtrong biaſſes of education and intereſt; We ſtraightway greedily embrace, all ſhewes and appearances of reaſon, which ſeem to make for our ſide; and with abundance of ſelfe applauſe, improve a meer ſneaking hint of an opinion, into a demonſtrative confidence.

Sixteenthly; *The thriving of the Canon Law a ſiſter profeſſion with School-Divinity.* Theſe two being as it were twins borne of their Mother the *Roman* Church much about the ſame time, by the midwifery of *Gratian* the Monk, and *Peter Lombard.* As for the Canon Law, I ſuppoſe it may not unfitly be called, a meſſe of Divinity and Civil Law boild together, but burnt too, by reaſon that as we ſay in Engliſh, *the Biſhop's foot have been in it*, namely the foot of the Biſhop of *Rome.* Whoſoever looks into it, he may eaſily perceive, how Papal politick tenents have been foiſted in as lawes. But if any one be loath to take the paines himſelfe, he ſhall find many places to this purpoſe, cited for his

hand, in *Sleidan's* third book *de quatuor ſummis imperiis.* Where that Judicious Authour expreſſeth himſelfe, with much indignation, againſt this kind of Learning. Nor was he alone moved with a prejudice againſt it; Many thouſands beſides him, having high reſentments of thoſe many ills, which ſpread abroad the world, by reaſon of the Canon law. Otherwiſe the *Decretals* would never have been branded with a proverbial ignominy, as they were in *France*: witneſſe that notable tetraſtique, recorded by *Gregory* of *Tholouſe*, in his Commentary on the preface of the *Decretals.*

Des puis que decret ha prins ales,
Et les Gendarmes portent males,
Et les moines vont a cheval,
En tout le mond n' ha que mal.

The firſt and laſt of theſe verſes, which only concern my purpoſe, may be thus Engliſhed.

After Decretals followed the decree,
Since that, the world hath n'ought but knavery.

Now if *Gregory the ninth's decretals*, were juſtly liable to ſuch a cenſure, what ſhall we ſay of the ſixth book put out by *Boniface the Eighth*, of the *Clementines*

tines by *Clement the fifth*, and the *extravagants* by *John the twenty ſecond?* The latter Pope ſtill exceeding the former in arrogancy and inſolence. However let the Canon Law be what it will; This is certain, it hath been one of the notableſt engines in the whole world, to raiſe the Papal *See* to an adored heighth. For by this means the minds of many thouſands, were trained up in a reverence to the *Roman* Biſhops, who ſeem to emulate Emperial Majeſty, by taking upon them to give lawes unto the world. Now the names of *Juſtinian* and *Tribonian* began to dwindle, and *Gregory* with his *Raymund* grew in requeſt. nor hath ever *Ariſtotle*, nor *Galen*, nor *Juſtinian*, nor the very *Bible* it ſelfe been more zealouſly ſmothered with commentatours, than the *decretals* of *Gregory* have been. Nay what ſay ye if the *Canoniſts* have been paſt all ſhame, in the heat of contending for their own faculties? *Charles du Moulin*, in his Treatiſe of the *French Monarchy* ſaith, that ſome of them carp't at the Civil Lawes as impious and of no worth. And *Francis Hottoman* in his Tract intitled *Fulmen Brutum* teſtifies, that they look upon the Pope as their *Jupiter*, giving him halves with the Emperour in the Government of the world; as appeares by this verſe which they commonly applied to the Pope.

Diviſum imperium cum Jove Cæſar habet.

This is high language you'l ſay, but perhaps it may be accounted modeſt, if we conſider how

their own law teacheth them, that the Pope is above the Emperour. Wherefore no man needs to doubt, that the prevailing of ſuch a profeſſion in the world, hath been an incredible advantage to the *Roman* Biſhop, as being the founder and patron thereof: For we all know, with what eagerneſſe of ſpirit, the profeſſours of any faculty, doe uſually contend for their patrons. Whence I may lawfully conclude, that as long as this pontificial law, ſhall be attended with wealthy preferments; So long the Pope will never want *Janiſaries*, I mean *Canoniſts*; Who for the ſake of their own profeſſion, and the bread which they get by it, will allwaies be ſure, to be truſty *Myrmidons* in the Roman cauſe.

Thus have I at laſt traced out the Papal encroachments, through Sixteene ſeveral cauſes, without mentioning others, which ſeeme not to have ſo great and neceſſary an influence. Such as the title of *Univerſal Biſhop*, given unto *Boniface the third*, by the Tyrant *Phocas*. The Holy Warre, trumpeted forth by *Peter the Hermite*, at the appointment of *Urban the Second*. The abrogation of the *Roman Banderenſian* Magiſtracy, whereby *Clement the Fifth*, became abſolute Maſter of *Rome*, and the like. Far leſſe was it my intent; to take notice of *Conſtantine's donation*, and ſuch other things; which indeed make much for the pontificial advancement if true: But their truth

truth is queſtioned by all indifferent men. There being as great a certainty, that many falſe ſtories have been coyn'd, as well as true ones ſuppreſſed by the Pope's creatures. Amongſt which kind of delinquents, 'tis probable that *Pandulphus*, the Librarian of the Lateran Church, was not the leaſt guilty.

CHAP. IV.

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A Corollary deduced from the preceeding discourse, with a Conclusion intimating how much the Pope is beholding to the want of able and Faithfull Historians.

AND now let the Papists object if they please, that we have have forsaken the paths of our forefathers, with little regard unto ancient times. I pray; What is the Antiquity they boast of? Or what were those ancestours they upbraid us with? Can they date their Hierarchichal constitution, under one supreme head, higher than the barbarous times? And are not we, as also the Nations round about us, the off-spring of Barbarians? As long as the *Roman* Empire stood firme, and the stock of primitive Christians did remaine, there was no Pope to be heard of. Nor is it likely, that ever the progeny of those men, who were converted by the Apostles, and taught by the Fathers, would have given way to Papal Dominion, any more than the posterity of the *Græcians* did. But in come our ancestors, a barbarous generation, halfe starved with the cold of their own Climates, and resolved for a warmer habitation. In come they, and like a deluge carry

carry all before them, implanting their ſelves in the roome of thoſe who were the race of firſt borne Chriſtians. Which when they had done, they did with admiration here from their conquered enemies, the newes of an *Omnipotent God*, a *Crucified Saviour*, a *Heaven* and a *Hell*. Now what could be expected from theſe ignorant Barbarians, whoſe former adoration was of no ſublimer ſtraine, than to worſhip *the Image of a dead man*, *a peice of wood*, or *a rotten clout*: Nay whoſe later diſcoveries, were made unto them by word of mouth, and taken upon truſt; they themſelves being void of all kind of Learning, whereby they might have been enabled to ſearch the Ancient Writers? I ſay what could be expected from ſuch men, but that they ſhould be eaſily cozened; partly with the ſpecious pretenſe of a derived ſucceſſion and ſupremacy from *Peter*, by the *Roman* Biſhop; and partly with the colluſion between the Biſhops of that Emperial City, and their own commanders.

Well then; if they be deluded muſt we be ſo to? Or rather ought we not to aſſert our own liberty, and ſhake off that pontificial yoke, under which the ſpirits of our forefathers did groan? The revolutions of eternal providence, have brought better times upon us their Children; than ever they enjoyed. It was much about two hundred yeares agoe, that *Mahomet* the Great Turke did take *Conſtantinople*, to the utter ſubverſion of the Græcian Empire. Whereby overcaſting the Sun of Chriſtianity with

a dismal cloud in the Eastern parts, he was the accidental occasion, that it shone the more bright in the West. For the poore Greeks, being dispersed all abroad; Their Learned men, to wit *Theodore Gaza*, *John Lascaris*, *Manuel Chrysaloras* and others, did betake themselves to the teaching of the Greeke tongue: Hereupon that treasury of all arts and sciences being so happily retreiv'd, the purity of Learning began to revive again: And those books which ever since the daies of the *Goths* and *Lombards*, had lain rotting in the publique libraries, were every where pulled out of heaps of dust, and recovered from the moths and worms. By this means, we who are the latest nephewes of our barbarous ancestours, doe yet overlook them, even in reference to their own daies. and plainly perceive, that they were Heathenish halfwitted Christians for a long time, void of all knowledg, and receiving their instructions, from the contrived policy of corrupted men. We on the contrary enjoy the Original Scriptures, and the Learned Monuments of the primitive Christians: by which it is easy to understand; that Christianity is no Carnal profession, much lesse that on it is entayl'd the dominion of this present world. That the Bishops of Rome, as well as other Bishops their brethren, were for the first three hundred yeares, persecuted by Heathen Emperours; And did afterwards remain in subjection to them, when turned Christians. That it was the barbarous ignorance of our Ancestors, which gave way to the Pope's ecclesiastique supremacy, and consequently

to

to his temporal encroachments. Wherefore we conceive it rational, to avoid the barbarisme of our forefathers; and to write after the Copy of those men, who were the founders of our religion, and those who were its first and purest professours: Humbly craving leave, to be no longer fool'd, by offering up the wealth of our Nation, and the sweat of our Countrymens browes, in sacrifice to a three cround Idol.

And truly as often as I think, at what vast expence of treasure, our Nation formerly was, and several others to this day are, upon the account of their subjection to the *Roman See*: I cannot choose but admire a certain fatality of Dominion allwaies attending that proud City founded by *Romulus*. In the daies of her *Senate*, and also of her *Cæsars*, she sate crowned Queen amongst the Cities, and empereresse over the Nations, from whom she received homage and tribute. When her enemies came blustering out of the north, more furiously than the winds come thence; She seemed indeed for a while, to hang down her head, to lean sadly on her elbow, and to bewaile the losse of her former Majesty: That Majesty, with which she commanded the Northern people, to keep beyond the *Rhine* and the *Danow*, the *Parthians* not to passe over *Euphrates*, and the more Southern *African* to sculke behind the monntaine *Atlas*. But it was not long first, ere she threw off her mourning weeds, and cloathed her selfe again with scarlet. For by the exaltation of her Bishop, she quickly obtain'd, and doth now enjoy

a far larger Empire, than ever she before had, even in the most August times of her victorious *Cæsars*. Do not the *French*, *Germans*, and *Poles*, offer up their tributary Devotions at her shrine? Not to mention that huge tract of ground, all along the *African* shore: Nor the Empire of *Pretious or Prestor John*, *or Prestegan*, call him what you will. Not to mention the *East Indie Islands*, and the vast continent of *China*, into all which places the reverence of her name hath been carried; either by the *Portingals*, or by the missionary Friers. Doe not the Countries under the *Castilian King*, both in this and the new found world, alone aggrandize her modern Empire, beyond its greatnesse in the dayes of old? Let no man therefore henceforward, cast it in the *Italian's* teeth, as *Erasmus* did; that he counts all other people barbarous. 'Tis true, the *Italians* are the very dregs and reliques, of *Goths*, *Vandals*, *Huns*, *Heruls*, *Alans*, *Gepids*, and *Lombards*: yet they impute barbarisme to all other Nations, as if whatsoever was Polite and Civil, lay circumscribed within the narrow bounds, of the *Alps*, the *Tyrrhene*, and the *Adriatique* Seas; as if nothing forsooth but barbarity was tramontane. But, would you know the reason? why? it is because they have outwitted the Nations round about them, as much as ever the old *Romans* did the Barbarians. And what they lost by the sword, they have with advantage regain'd by their wit. Which he well understood who said, *Roma Caput Mundi, quicquid non possidet armis, Relligione tenet.* But God be thanked, our own Nation with some others, have pret-

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ty well quitted themſelves of this barbariſme: And O when will the time come, that the reſt alſo will doe the like?

When will the world rouſe up her ſelfe, and be redeemed from a ſlaviſh proſtration, to the ſhallowneſſe of ſome mens notions: that great and noble ſoules may at length have a free entercourſe, or traffick for conceptions, to improve the ſtock of humane knowledg? As for thoſe men who ſtill call upon us, to humble our underſtandings unto their traditions, and to deny our ſelves in our own reaſons: I wiſh they would once conſider, how ſmall the tradition concerning Apoſtolical times was, when *Euſebius* lived. He complains in the præface to his Hiſtory, of the ſcarce knowledg which they had in his daies, concerning the primitive Chriſtian affairs. What then muſt we expect to have, who receive our information from Authours ſince him? For my part, when I reflect on the ages that are gone and paſt, and the Hiſtories that are recorded of them, I cannot chuſe but deplore the partiality and weakneſſe of Eccleſiaſtique Hiſtorians: who, if we will not diſſemble, muſt needs be confeſſed, to have given lame narrations of things, and to abound with an infinite number, of impertinent, ridiculous, incredible ſtories. Inſomuch that I am very confident, we have a farre more genuine and ſincere account of thoſe times, when *Alexander* and *Julius Cæſar* lived; than of thoſe, when *Conſtantine* raigned and *Charlemaigne*. The truth is, after the barbarous inundations, Learning did ſo generally decay, that the Chriſti-

ans for a long time, either had no writers at all; or else such, as it had been as good to have none. Otherwise, why did they (out of envy or ignorance or both) bury in a profound silence, the glorious proceedings, of that thrice renowned *Saracenical* Empire. An Empire of as wonderfull a growth, and as noble actions, as ever any since the Creation: yer we might have pardoned their foule play with the *Saracens*, had they been free and candid, in their relation concerning the Christian affairs. Shall I tell yee? In those daies, the Christian world was overspread, with an idle and ignorant generation of *Moncks*: who lay in their cels, and coyned whole legends of miraculous lies, wherewith to cheat the common people. Or else they were observing the weather, and making pretty little rimes, upon the several seasons and tides of the yeare. But had there been any amongst them, both able and willing, to leave unto posterity, a full and impartial account of affairs; the Bishops of *Rome* would long before this, have been shamed out of their delusory pranks. Nor should I have needed to write this treatise, concerning the Papal Usurpations.

FINIS.

The Method and Contents.

The Scope and Design of this Book is to manifest the Papal Usurpation, *by reflecting on Historical passages; and not by Logical Arguments drawn, either from Texts of Scripture, or Testimonies of other Authours:*

This manifestation *is endeavoured two waies.*

First, *By shewing, that in the primitive times, the Bishop of* Rome *made no noise in the world, nor was his supremacy at all dreamt of.* In the First Chapter.

Secondly, *And chiefly, by shewing: After what manner, the Pope not only arrived to a Supremacy in the Church;* In the Second Chapter:

But also confirmed himselfe, in His Ecclesiastical Usurpation; and further encroacht upon the Temporal Magistrate. In the Third Chapter.

Lastly, In the fourth Chapter; *A Corollary is deduced from the preceeding discourse, concluding with a reason; Why the Pontificial unjust actions, have not been justly discovered.*

FINIS.